

Public Health Advisory Committee

Preventing Childhood Lead Poisoning
in Minneapolis

November 19, 2020

Childhood lead poisoning

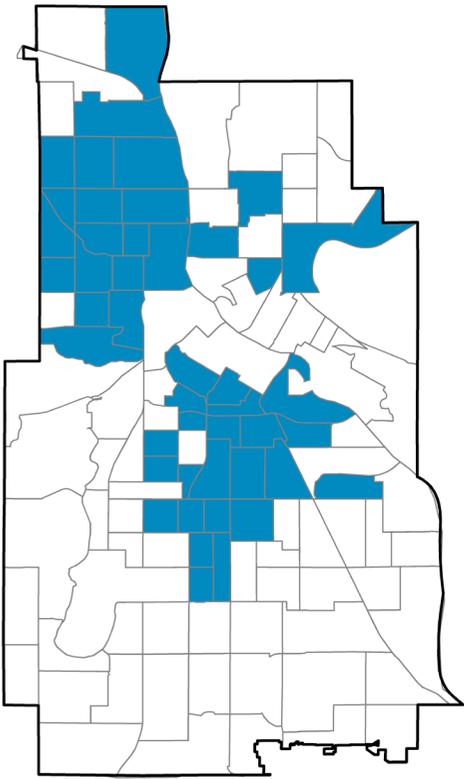
294 Minneapolis children have been poisoned by lead over the last 3 years

The effects of childhood lead poisoning on children's brains are devastating

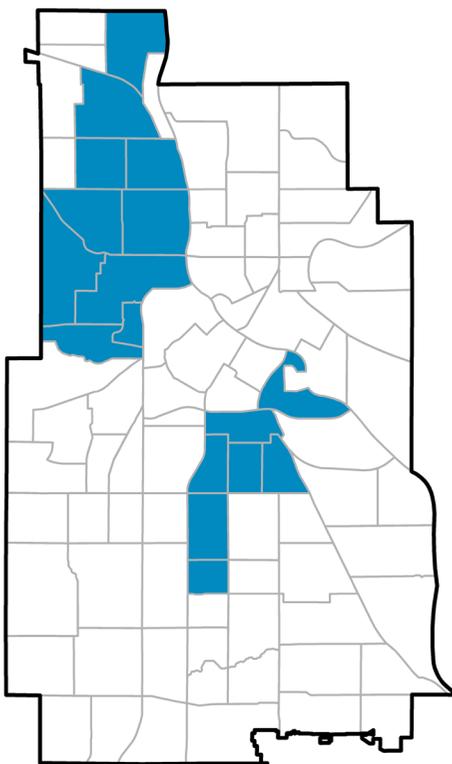
- Reduced IQ
- Decreased cognitive functioning
- Reduced educational attainment
- Increased antisocial behavior

Childhood lead poisoning disproportionately affects black, indigenous and other children of color

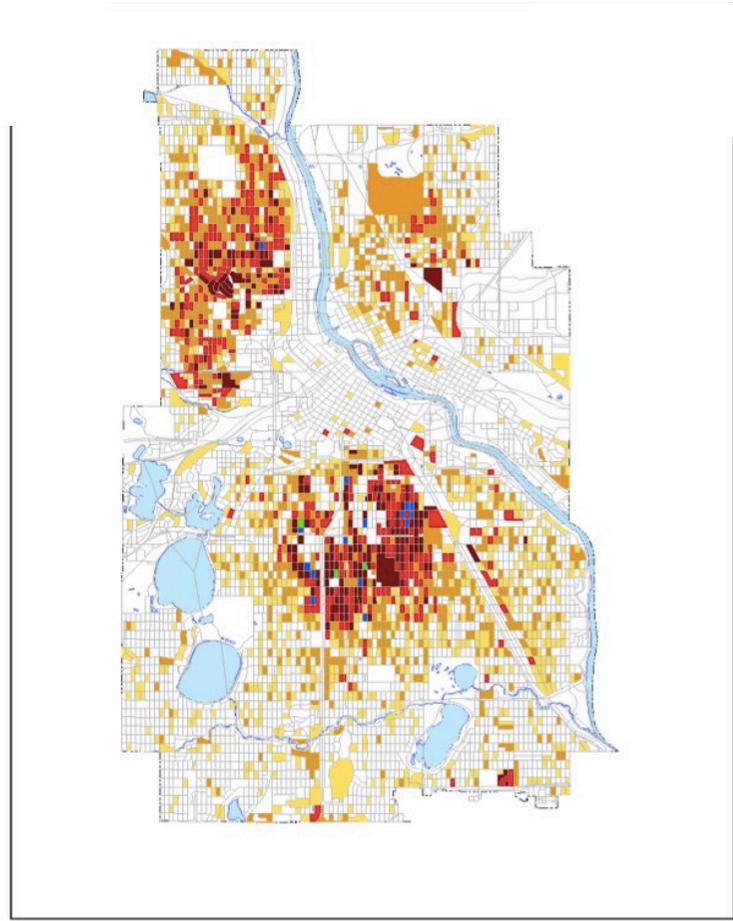
**<185% Poverty Level
2017**



**>60% People of Color
2017**



**Elevated Blood Lead Levels
1999-2014**



We can solve the problem of childhood lead poisoning

- We know the cause: exposure to deteriorated lead-based paint in older housing
- We know how to identify deteriorated lead-based paint
- We know how to remove or mitigate deteriorated lead-based paint

Guideline for accelerating efforts to prevent childhood lead poisoning in Minneapolis

Public Health Advisory Committee

Effects of childhood lead poisoning (Elevated Blood Lead level, EBL >5 ug/dl)

- **Serious and consequential**
- **Irreversible**
- **Entirely Preventable**

Limitations the PHAC proposal addresses

Intervening too late

We are reacting to poisonings (EBLs) that have already occurred rather than preventing them

Taking too long

At the current rate of inspections and remediations, it will take decades to eliminate lead exposure hazards from just the highest risk housing

Proposed Strategy

Build on a successful model

Can expand the Minneapolis Health Department's existing and highly effective lead programs to meaningfully accelerate efforts to eliminate lead hazards

Address the critical need

The City currently has no requirement to inspect or identify lead hazards in housing, or a mechanism for doing this

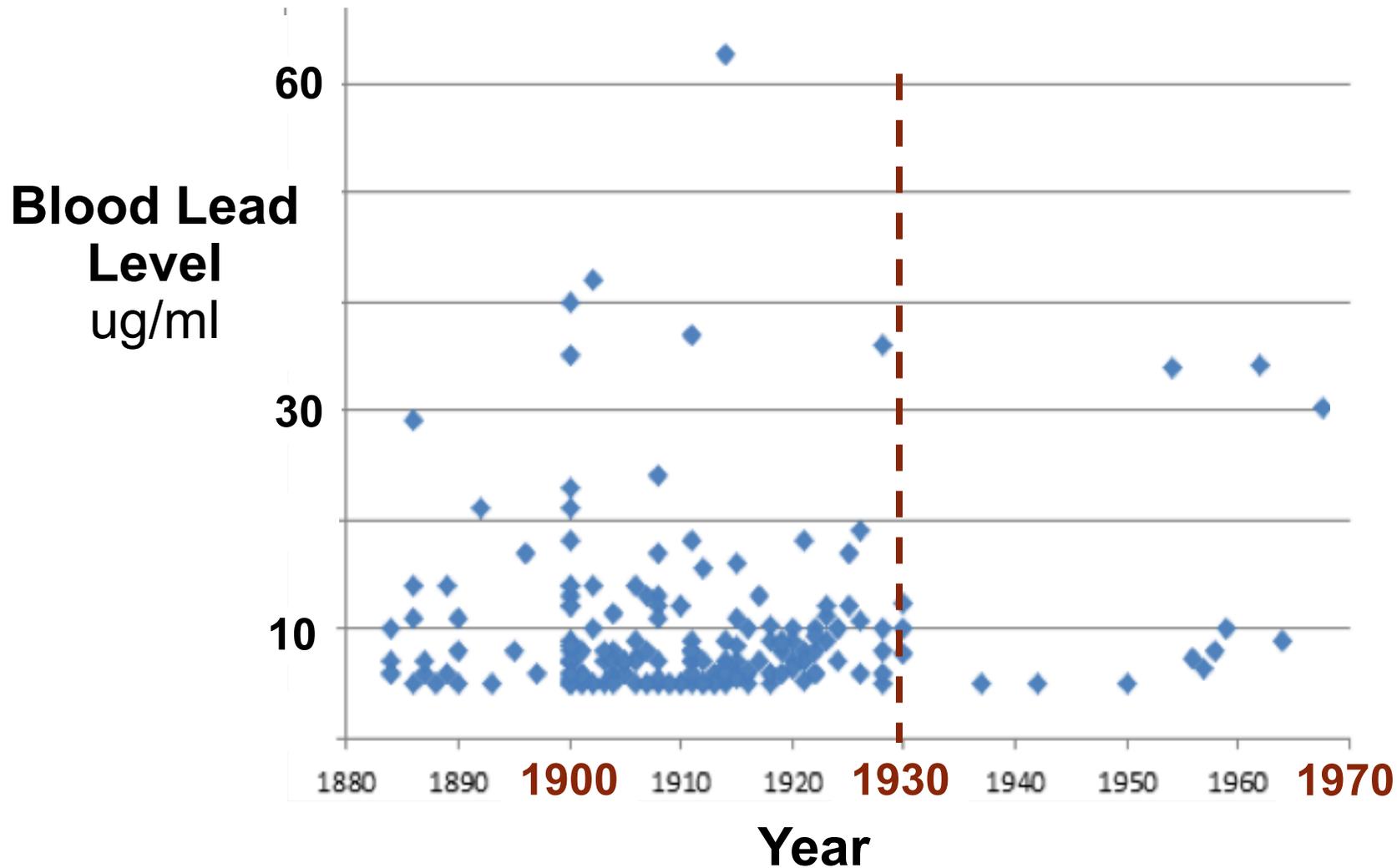
Ability to inspect high-risk housing is essential to enable identifying and eliminating lead hazards

Scope of the problem

- Lead added to paint for centuries to improve density, coverage, durability
- Danger to children recognized since 1800s
 - League of Nations recommended banning lead paint in 1921
- Use of lead in paint fiercely defended by industry
- Lead content in indoor paint first regulated in U.S. in 1978
- Legacy is that **half of all Twin Cities homes** are presumed to contain lead-based paint

Identifying high-risk housing

Building Age



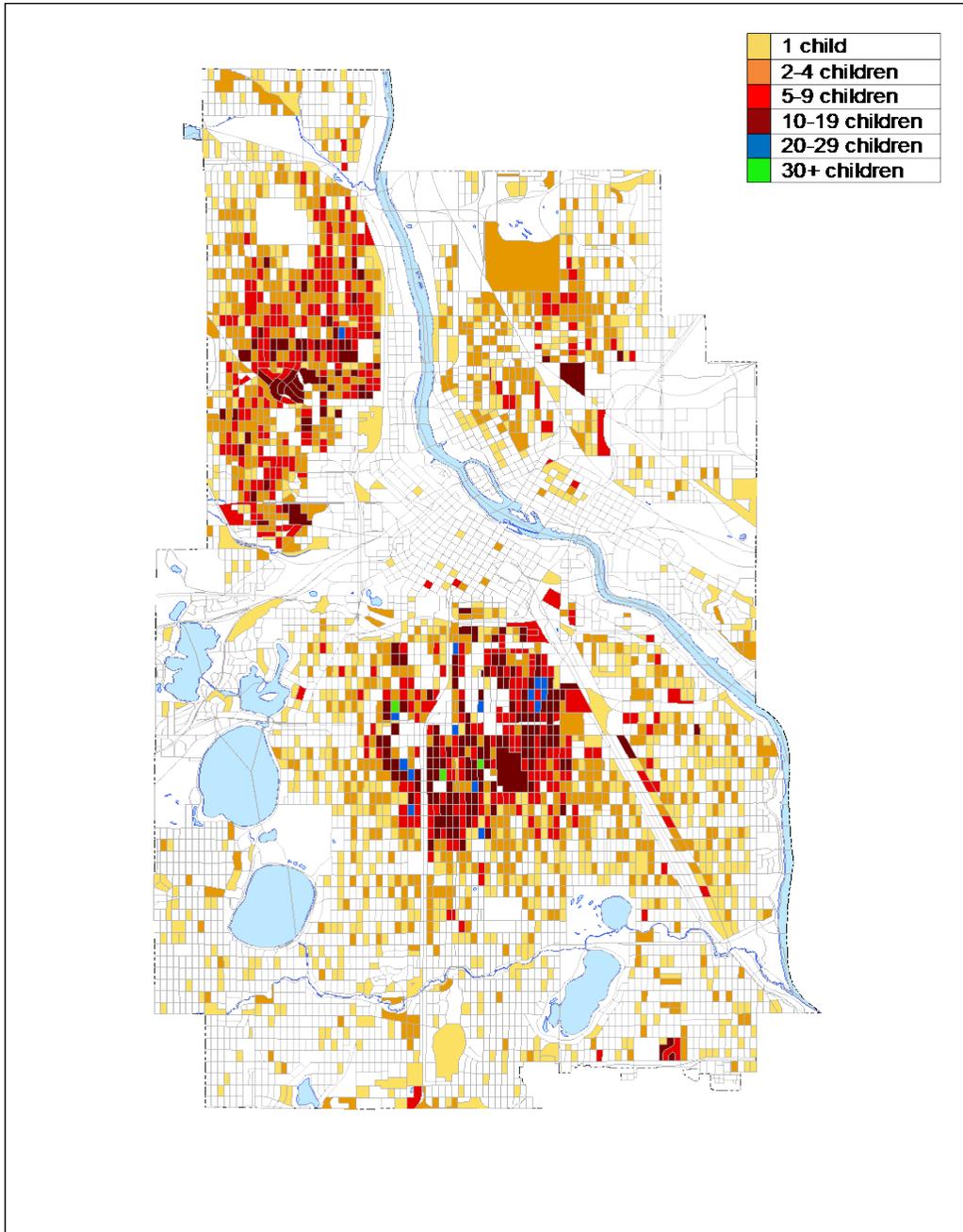
Identifying high-risk housing

Location

Neighborhoods

Central
Jordan
Phillips
Powderhorn
Ventura Village

Primarily rental units



Licensed rental units in Minneapolis

<u>Building Age</u>	<u>Entire city</u>	<u>5 highest risk neighborhoods</u>
All	94,000	9,473
Pre 1978	71,000	7,500
Pre-1930	38,000	5,100

Current Health Department Focus

- Address the most immediate need:
 - Identify children with **elevated blood lead level** (EBL >5 ug/dl)
- Inspect housing
- Identify sources of lead exposure
- Work with property owners to arrange remediation
 - Identify grant funding to defray the cost
 - Assist in hiring contractors
 - Assure that the work has been completed

Lead hazard remediation

Most common source of lead exposure in Minneapolis is windows and frames

Chips, flakes, dust from peeling or worn painted surfaces
Some can be painted over, then maintained by landlord
Permanent solution is replacement of window and frame
Usually accomplished in 1-2 days
Does not require temporary housing

Cost depends on extent of work needed

Generally about half can be covered by grants
Building owner cooperation is good

How long will this take?

Of the 5,100 highest risk rental units

Not all have lead hazards

Some have already been inspected and remediated

Some can have surfaces painted over

If **approximately** half of the units need full remediation:

About 850 full remediations need yearly to reach all units
over **3 years**

In 2019, the Health Department oversaw remediation of
175 units (triggered by EBLs)

At current rate it would take **15 years** to reach just these
highest risk units

A shift to Preventive Inspections

Current Health Department responsibility

EBL → Inspect → Evaluate options → Remediation

Proposed shared responsibility

Inspect → **Screen/refer** → Inspect → Evaluate options → Remediate

Regulatory Services
Department

Health Department

Peeling or worn paint in a pre-1930 home is presumed to contain lead



Shared responsibility for housing hazards

Regulatory Services Department

Consider lead-based paint a safety hazard like
gas, electric, plumbing, construction

Prioritize and inspect high-risk units, flag peeling
or worn paint

Health Department

Act on rental units flagged by Housing Inspections
Evaluate and arrange remediation

Shared responsibility for housing hazards

Regulatory Services Department

Consider lead-based paint a safety hazard like gas, electric, plumbing, construction
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Health Department

Act on rental units flagged by Housing Inspections
Evaluate and arrange remediation

Shared Position

to enable preventive inspections

What the PHAC asks of the City Council

Establish a comprehensive plan to substantially accelerate efforts to prevent lead poisoning, including as key features:

- Moving to a primary prevention model
- Enabling a partnership between the Health and Regulatory Services Departments
- Setting measurable goals to allow program assessment

Prioritize moving forward with the shared Health and Housing Coordinator position

Looking Ahead

- 71,000 pre-1978 rental units in Minneapolis
- Current proposal targets 5,100 of the highest risk units = **7%**
- If effective, expand in a stepwise fashion
 - Rapidly deal with the highest risk housing
 - Serve as a pilot program

Thank you!

- We stand for questions
- The Public Health Advisory Committee meets the 4th Tuesday of each month (except December) from 6-8 p.m.
- For more information on Boards and Commissions, visit the City's website:
<http://www2.minneapolismn.gov/boards/index.htm>